

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 CAB-09 COME-00 EB-11

FAA-00 DOTE-00 USSS-00 SY-10 DRC-01 /188 W

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R 281050Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5004

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 2332

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, MT

SUBJ: KLM HIJACKING: FOLLOW-UP

REF: VALLETTA 2315

1. NOVEMBER 28 PRESS REPORTS CARRY ACCOUNTS OF REPORTERS' INTERVIEW WITH AIRCRAFT PASSENGERS WHICH SHED SOME ADDITIONAL LIGHT ON ITEMS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED.

2. ON THE HIJACKERS, PASSENGER TASHIO KIKKAWA SHOWED NEWSMEN AN AUTOGRAPH OF ONE OF HIJACKERS WHICH BORE THE NAME "WAZID ISMAIL" AND ADDRESS "BAGHDAD, P.O.M. 1542." KIKKAWA SAID THAT ISMAIL HAD BEEN FRIENDLY AND HAD ASSISTED PASSENGERS. OTHER REPORTS INDICATE THAT PASSENGERS DISAGREED ON MENTAL STATE OF HIJACKERS, WITH SOME STATING THEY

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WERE CALM AND OTHERS SAYING THEY WERE EXCEEDINGLY

NERVOUS. ONE REPORT SAID THAT THE LEADER SEEMED TO BE ABOUT THIRTY-TWO, AND THAT HE REFERRED TO OTHER TWO AS NUMBER SIX AND NUMBER EIGHT. ONE PASSENGER SAID A HIJACKER HAD TOLD HIM THAT HE HAD ALREADY HIJACKED A LUFTHANSA PLANE TO DEMAND RELEASE OF GUERRILLA PRISONERS IN GERMANY.

3. THE PASSENGER INTERPRETER, FEISAL SALAM, THE 26 YEAR OLD SON OF FORMER LEBANESE PRIME MINISTER FEISAL SAEB (SIC), DESCRIBED MINTOFF'S CONVERSATIONS WITH HIJACKERS AS BEING LIKE A TALK BETWEEN " A FATHER AND HIS SONS." HE DESCRIBED THE HIJACKERS AS "LIKEABLE, CALM, AND SILENT, NEVER SHOWING SIGNS OF TENSION."

4. ANOTHER PASSENGER DESCRIBED ONE OF HIJACKERS AS A THIRTY -FOUR YEAR OLD FAT ARAB" WHO BRANDISHED A GERMAN MADE PISTOL, AND WHO WAS ALWAYS KIND TO PASSENGERS, AND AT TIMES PLAYFUL WITH THE CHILDREN.

5. ANOTHER INTERVIEW REPORTS THAT ARABS AMONG FIRST GROUP TO DEPART AIRCRAFT WERE CALLED BACK, BUT ONLY A.M. HASSAN, A SUDANESE BUSINESSMAN, VOLUNTEERED TO RETURN. WHEN HE REENTERED AIRCRAFT, HIJACKERS CHANGED THEIR MINDS AND HE WAS ALLOWED TO REJOIN GROUP. HASSAN BELIEVES THAT THE REASON FOR HIJACKING WAS THAT "AN IRAQI BRANCH OF THE GUERRILLA ORGANIZATION WANTED TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM THE ARAB SUMMIT IN ALGIERS." HASSAN FURTHER BELIEVES THAT THE GRENADES AND OTHER EXPLOSIVES WERE ALREADY ABOARD AIRCRAFT WHEN HIJACKERS BOARDED IN BEIRUT.

6. ALL REPORTS HAVE PASSENGERS HIGHLY PRAISING KLM CREW. PASSENGERS AND HOSTESSES WERE RETURNED TO AMSTERDAM EVENING NOV 27. GETZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIRCRAFT HIJACKING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973VALLET02332
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: VALLETTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973117/aaaaaemb.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: VALLETTA 2315
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19-Sep-2001 by elyme>; APPROVED <21-Nov-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KLM HIJACKING: FOLLOW-UP
TAGS: PINR, MT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005